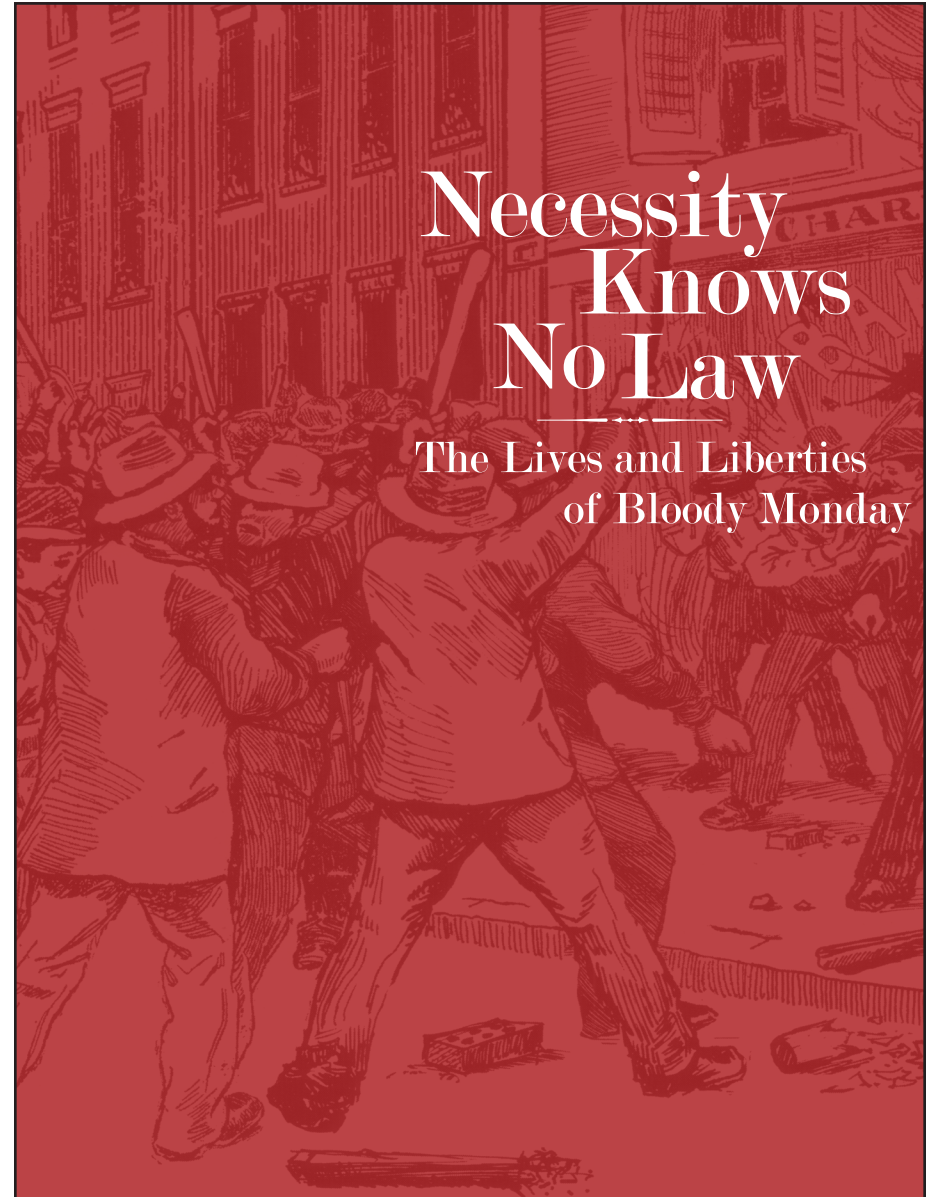


MUSEUM THEATRE

KentuckyHistoricalSociety

Necessity Knows No Law

The Lives and Liberties
of Bloody Monday



KentuckyHistoricalSociety

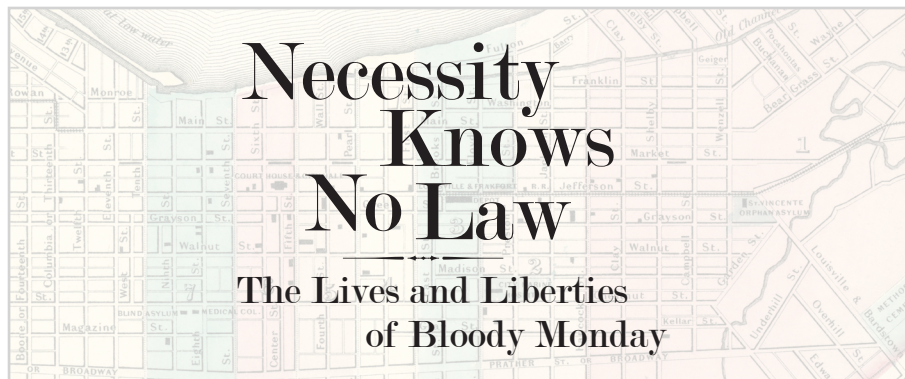
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Connections. Perspective. Inspiration.



The Kentucky Historical Society is an agency of
the Kentucky Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet.

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In 1845 a disease destroyed Irish potato crops and thousands fled the famine. Among the emigrants was Michael Heffernan, a Catholic shoemaker. He eventually settled, married, and started a family in Louisville, where Germans and Irish composed nearly a third of the white population.

Antebellum Louisville, like many American cities of the time, did not welcome these newcomers. Nativists in the new American Party that dominated Jefferson County government believed that immigrants threatened their cultural identity and political authority.

On Election Day, August 6, 1855, the American Party supporters commandeered the polls and attacked voters who could not prove their citizenship. The conflict grew into a drunken mob that burned buildings in German and Irish neighborhoods. At least twenty-two died and the day was named “bloody Monday.” The American Party eventually split over slavery and vanished from Jefferson County by the end of the Civil War.

Over a hundred years later, a descendent of Heffernan found a small ledger book, containing an account of the violent events of “Bloody Monday.” Our 15-minute play combines Michael’s vivid descriptions with newspaper articles and other historical accounts.

KHS Museum Theatre

Since 1998, the Museum Theatre program has staged more than forty original productions, often inspired by the rich resources in the Kentucky Historical Society collection. Each play is presented within KHS exhibition spaces and is designed to connect audiences with the sights, sounds, and stories of the past. These professional productions provide museum visitors with a personal perspective of historical characters and encourage them to explore the exhibitions to learn more. Audience members often find they relate to the story itself. *What’s your story?*

Image: Louisville Courier-Journal, November 7, 1897.

To learn more about the immigrant experience or “Bloody Monday” in Kentucky:

- Stephens, Tom. “Annotated Notes on Bloody Monday, Louisville, August 6, 1855,” *Kentucky Ancestors*, Vol. 41, Summer 2006, 174.
- McDaniel, Gerald. *Aindreas: The Messenger*, Louisville, Kentucky 1855 (Van Meter Publishing, 2000). (Historical Fiction)
- Deignan, Tom. *Irish Americans* (The Ivy Press Limited, 2002). (History - Juvenile Literature)

Visit the historical highway markers and sites of “Bloody Monday” in Louisville:

- “Bloody Monday” and American (Know-Nothing) Party (Marker number: 2205), 1011 West Main St., Louisville (site of Quinn’s Row)
- Cathedral of the Assumption (Marker number: 1891), 443 S. Fifth St., Louisville.
- Jefferson County Courthouse (Marker number: 1697), Sixth & Jefferson Sts., Louisville.
- Saint Martin of Tours Church, 639 South Shelby Street.
- Statue of Louisville Journal editor George Prentice. Louisville Public Library, 301 York St. Press of Kentucky, 2000.



Michael Heffernan/Research Assistant – Adam Luckey

Since graduating from Georgetown College in 1999, Adam has worked extensively with most of the theatres in Central Kentucky. He teaches with the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of Kentucky, is an associate artist with Actors Guild of Lexington, and is the Museum Theatre specialist for the Kentucky Historical Society.

Playwright/Director – Greg Hardison

Since 1999, KHS Museum Theatre Coordinator, Greg Hardison, has acted, researched, written, directed and produced original plays covering almost every period of Kentucky History. He has received awards for his work in Florida, Virginia, and Kentucky, and currently serves on the board for the International Museum Theatre Alliance.

Special thanks: Barb Heffernan and the Heffernan family, Tom Stephens – KHS Associate Editor, John Kleber - University of Louisville, Robert Foreshaw – Living History Coordinator Palace Stables Heritage Center (Armagh, Ireland), Page’s Shoe Repair (Frankfort), Kevin O’Neal – Good Shepherd Church, Cathedral of the Assumption, David McElrath/Joe Buniff – Set design and construction, Jake Turner - Lighting design, Don Coffey and Bob Hutchison – Musical Inspiration.

Costume design and construction: Cathy West – all clothing; historical consultant – KHS head registrar, Julianne Foster, Shoes – Fugawee

Dialect Coach: Lara St. Peter

Song credits: “Thousands are Sailing to Amerikay,” “The Parting Glass”